

Shri Gopala Rao: May I know whether any useful researches are undertaken in this direction by our institutes?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Yes, Sir, and very useful results have been obtained also.

PRICES FOR PEPPER CROP

*481. **Shri V. P. Nayar:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether the Government of India have made any efforts to get better prices for the pepper crop in view of the estimated shortage in the production of pepper for 1953 in the Travancore-Cochin State?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): Production figures for the 1952-53 crop are not yet available. The decline in internal prices in the recent past has resulted largely from international factors. Internal prices of commodities largely exported are difficult to maintain if the international prices are also looking down. A Cash Crops Inquiry Committee has been appointed to examine the various aspects of production and marketing of certain important dollar earning crops including pepper with a view to ascertaining if any centralised direction is necessary and feasible.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether any estimates have been made about the shortage in the production of pepper?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I could not say.

Shri P. T. Chacko: May I know whether Government are making any endeavour to give any assistance to the cultivators for its development, at least by spending a portion of the amount which the Government are getting by way of export duty on pepper on scientific research or things like that?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I could not give any detailed information on the point.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether it is a fact that U.S. trade circles have sent complaints to the Government of India that the pepper exported from this country is subject to adulteration and may I also know whether this sort of propaganda through allegations is conducted in order to get the prices of pepper reduced?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Such complaints would be referred to my colleague in charge of Commerce and Industry. It has not come to our notice.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether the Ministry has made any inquiries through the Indian Embassy in U.S. in this respect?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: No, Sir, we have not.

Shri Kelappan: Is it under the contemplation of Government to establish a Pepper Board similar to the Tea or Coffee Board?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Not so far.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know whether any of the organisations of the cultivators of pepper have asked for help, and if so, whether any help has been rendered to them?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I have no information here.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We cannot go into the whole gamut.

Shri Punnoose: May I know the quantity of pepper produced in the years 1950-51, 1951-52 and 1952-53?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I have got the prices and particulars of production. It is a fairly long statement.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It will be laid on the Table.

Shri Punnoose: May I know the countries to which we export our produce?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It does not arise out of this question.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: May I know whether the Government propose to set up a production expansion fund for pepper?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: This question will arise when we get the report of this inquiry Committee which has been appointed now.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether Government have taken any steps to see that the actual producer of pepper gets the maximum price?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: That is always the endeavour of the Ministry of Agriculture.

COACH-BUILDING FIRM IN SWITZERLAND

***484. Shri Gidwani:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government have appointed a Special Officer to review the existing arrangement between them and a Coach-building Firm of Switzerland?

(b) If so, will the Officer have the right to scrutinise whether an agreement for associating the Firm with the construction and operation of the proposed workshop at Perambar is necessary?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Yes; an officer has been placed on special duty to review the agreement with the Coach-building firm, as well as to deal with a few other matters concerning procurement of certain Railway stores from abroad.

(b) The officer will review the agreement and negotiate for its improvement. In the view of Government, a technical aid agreement for the establishment of early and economical production in India of the integral type of coach, is essential.

Shri Gidwani: May I know whether the Special Officer who was being appointed had any hand in the previous agreement?

Shri Alagesan: No, Sir.

Shri Gidwani: Is Indian talent not available?

Shri Alagesan: That has been discussed in this House.

Shri Gidwani: The Agreement cannot be cancelled now?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Midway?

Shri K. K. Basu: May I know whether in the terms of the Agreement the Government of India is made liable to pay extra compensation?

Shri Alagesan: No, Sir. There is no warrant for any such assumption.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India was consulted, or is he likely to be consulted, before making final decisions with regard to this Agreement?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What is the good of making suggestions which are beyond the scope of anybody's charge?

Shri S. N. Das: Before entering into an Agreement, it is incumbent upon the Government to consult the Auditor-General.

Shri Alagesan: It has already been entered into. We are now trying to revise and improve it in various respects.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether in this Agreement, there is any condition regarding the conduct of cases which may arise out of this Agreement?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Any arbitration clause?

Shri V. P. Nayar: Legal proceedings.

Shri Alagesan: I should like to have notice. A copy of the Agreement is available also.

CHAIRMAN, CENTRAL TRACTOR ORGANISATION

***485. Shri Gidwani:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the present Chairman of the Central Tractor Organisation has been drawing daily allowance for working both as Chairman C.T.O. and Joint Secretary in the same Station?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): It is not correct to say that the Chairman, Central Tractor Organisation is "drawing daily allowance for working both as Chairman, C.T.O. and Joint Secretary in the same station". The two offices are seven miles away from each other and on any day on which the Chairman, C.T.O., has to work in both offices and uses his own transport for the journey, he is permitted to draw daily allowance according to the rules.

Shri Gidwani: I want to know whether the rules cannot be changed now and cannot a staff car be provided to this officer for coming from C.T.O. office to the Secretariat?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: All these suggestions and various other alternatives were examined. It was found that this would be the most economical method.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): I am thankful to the hon. Member for drawing attention to this anomaly and the position will be examined and remedied.

**ANCHAL AND TELEPHONE DEPARTMENT
EMPLOYEES OF TRAVANCORE-COCHIN**

***489. Shri P. T. Chacko:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is the policy of Government to give promotions to the